

VZCZCXRO7099  
OO RUEHLH RUEHPW  
DE RUEHIL #1079/01 1381510  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 181510Z MAY 09  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2793  
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0295  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0369  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 4908  
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 1644  
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 7247  
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 6187  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 3938  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 9416

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 ISLAMABAD 001079

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/18/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: IDP CRISIS UPDATE: MEETINGS WITH GOP, G8 HEADS OF MISSION, AND ICRC

REF: A) ISLAMABAD 1042 B) ISLAMABAD 1033 C) ISLAMABAD 1031

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson, for reasons 1.4 (b)(d)

¶1. (C) Summary: At a May 18 meeting between GOP Economic Advisor Shaukat Tarin and G-8 Heads of Mission, Tarin said that while the government is focused on immediate IDP emergency needs, it also is looking at reconstruction in order to permit IDPs to return to their homes as soon as their areas become peaceful. DCM urged that the GOP ensure complete integration and coordination between the GOP, donor conference and the roll-out of the UN Humanitarian Response Plan revision. Donors also urged that the GOP not pressure IDPs to return to their homes prematurely. Donors briefly reviewed their assistance plans. Tarin encouraged camp visits by donors. At a May 18 ICRC donors briefing and separate meeting with Embassy, ICRC Head of Delegation Pascal Cuttat indicated that ICRC was currently operating with additional capacity and would not currently issue a new appeal. Cuttat said that while ICRC had expanded initially following the breakdown of the Swat agreement, increasing ICRC numbers further would be too dangerous in the current volatile, insecure environment. ICRC asks donors only to complete funding of its roughly USD 50 million March appeal. Cuttat praised the operational capacity and honesty of its partner the Pakistan Red Crescent and the commitment of LtGeneral Nadeem. Overview of ICRC activities below. End summary

G-8 Heads of Mission Meeting with Economic Advisor Tarin

-----

¶2. (U) On May 18, G-8 Heads of Mission met with Economic Advisor Shaukat Tarin to discuss implementation of donor commitments to Pakistan as well as the immediate response to the IDP emergency confronting the country. Former Italian Foreign Minister and Member of the European Parliament Gianni De Michelis also participated in the meeting. DCM represented Embassy Islamabad.

¶3. (SBU) Italian Ambassador Prati told Tarin that the Swat IDP emergency presents an opportunity for Pakistan and the international donor community to focus on practical implementation of assistance. He then proposed that each of the participants review their governments, response to the IDP situation:

--UK: The British issued a joint statement during President Zardari,s visit regarding UK pounds 655 million in development assistance for Pakistan; they are providing UK pounds 12 million for immediate assistance to the IDPs.

--Japan: The Japanese Ambassador announced that he would be signing an agreement on May 18 with Secretary Economic Affairs Division Qayyum for JY 2 billion (\$20 million) in assistance that would be available for IDP relief, contingent on GOP preferences.

--Germany: The Germans have committed Euros 13 million for quick dispersing assistance to the IDPs.

--France: President Sarkozy announced a commitment of Euros 12 million for IDPs, of which Euros 2 million is to be used for humanitarian assistance and the remaining Euros 10 million for reconstruction.

--European Commission: The EC has committed Euros 7 million in assistance for IDPs to date and will re-evaluate its position after release of the UN flash appeal at the end of the week; the EC is also looking at possible adjustments to its normal program.

--Canada: The Canadians have pledged C\$5 million for Swat IDPs.

--Italy: Prati indicated that Italy will be sending a planeload of relief supplies, probably next week; Italy has

ISLAMABAD 00001079 002 OF 004

also pledged Euros 400 thousand for immediate relief needs.

--Russia: Moscow is &fully informed on the situation8 and is currently considering a humanitarian response.

¶4. (SBU) Speaking for the U.S., DCM reported on Congressional consideration of the Kerry-Lugar legislation as well as the FY'09 Supplemental legislation. He also noted the OFDA \$4.9 million commitment to the immediate emergency as part of the \$60m assistance the U.S. has provided for IDPs since last August. Finally, the DCM reported that the U.S. would be making an announcement on further assistance to the IDPs within the coming days.

¶5. (SBU) Tarin expressed appreciation for the G-8 support. He noted that the number of IDPs could reach 2 million as the fighting resulted in greater dislocations. While the government is focused on the immediate need to address basic subsistence requirements, they need also to look at reconstruction as they want the IDPs to return to their homes as soon as their areas become peaceful. Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar and Special Support Group chairman LtGeneral Nadeem will organize a detailed briefing for the donors the week of May 25, he said, and there will be daily briefings for donors thereafter. Tarin also indicated that the GOP desires to facilitate visits to the IDP camps by donors in order to strengthen the transparency of relief distributions. Finally, Tarin confirmed that the GOP will host a mini-donors conference in Islamabad on May 21.

¶6. (SBU) In response, DCM urged that the GOP ensure that there is complete integration and coordination between the GOP,s donor conference and the roll-out of the UN Humanitarian Response Plan revision the following day. After a wobbly response from Secretary Qayyum, Tarin interjected and assured that there will be full coordination. DCM, joined by UK High Commissioner Brinkley, also urged that the GOP not pressure IDPs to return to their homes prematurely. Tarin took the point, saying the GOP doesn,t want to get into a dislocation-relocation-dislocation cycle. He noted that the government has an opportunity now to win hearts and minds, as the political landscape has changed. The

government is mindful, he said, that if they take care of the IDPs, they can start to win the propaganda war. Tarin mentioned that the government is taking steps to keep the IDPs from coming into major Pakistani cities, expressing some concern that extremists might infiltrate the IDP settlements and create a Trojan horse situation for the government. Brinkley asked that the GOP commit to keeping all donors, not the G-8 donors alone, fully informed of developments, to which Tarin responded positively.

¶17. (SBU) The EC representative closed out the discussion on IDP relief by asking for Tarin's assistance in ensuring that relief experts coming from donor capitals receive visas promptly and be provided ready access to IDP camps. Tarin pledged to assist and added that the government would ensure that the experts be provided security as well.

#### ICRC Briefing and Update

-----

¶18. (U) In a May 18 donors briefing and in a separate meeting with Embassy, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) delegation head Pascal Cuttat said that ICRC does not intend to issue a new Pakistan IDP funding appeal but only to seek full funding of its current USD 45-50 million (SF 54 m) appeal. By the end of March, ICRC's appeal had been half funded, and Cuttat estimated that now it was funded at the two-thirds level. He indicated that if the conflict dies down, ICRC could probably address the needs of more people with the same level of staffing.

¶19. (C) As the GOP military operations began in Bajaur in August of 2008, ICRC began ramping up its staff in this part of Pakistan using its Peshawar logistics hub, which had previously been focused on Afghanistan and then on the

ISLAMABAD 00001079 003 OF 004

Balochistan earthquake. Since August 2008, ICRC has increased its expatriate staff from 25 to 100 and its local national staff from 300 to 700. It raised its Pakistan funding requirement from SF 17 m in 2008 (projected SF 23 m for 2009) to the current SF 54 m. During the ramping up, ICRC has concentrated on its strengths by delivering food, shelter, and health services to the displaced persons. Cuttat explained that when the conflict intensified last August, ICRC believed that it needed an increased size and profile to be both relevant and protected. It now believes that further expansion would result in security trouble. Currently, it has sixty international staff in Peshawar, half of whom are in the field during the day but back in Peshawar at night. Currently the ICRC international staff can go to Buner but it only has national staff in Dir for now. ICRC will try to send international staff to Dir this week.

¶10. (SBU) At the breakdown of the Swat peace agreement a few weeks ago, ICRC was the lone international humanitarian assistance provider in Lower Dir and had contact with both sides of the conflict in Swat. It was already looking south to build a presence in Orakzai and to negotiate use of airstrips in Waziristan. At the time of the breakdown of the Swat peace agreement, Pakistan was already one of ICRC's biggest operations on the order of Sudan and Congo. It was, and is now, prepared to meet the food needs of 120,000 on a monthly basis and the health, water and sanitation needs of 25,000-50,000 through the end of the year. After the breakdown of the Swat agreement, ICRC entered Buner for the first time. It has never left Dir but has recently been unable to get expatriates or food and materiel in to the district. Over the past week, ICRC tried twice unsuccessfully to bring medical supplies into Mingora. While ICRC had security guarantees from both sides, the fighting was simply too intense to permit entry.

¶11. (SBU) ICRC believes that it now has a fully credible, operational staff, and that if it were to increase its

numbers now, regardless of area, it would &run into trouble.8 While it had to push initially to remain relevant, pushing further would be too dangerous in this volatile, insecure environment. ICRC basis its risk-taking and movements on the information it obtains from daily communication with the army, militants and the Taliban.

¶12. (SBU) Cuttat said that the Pakistani Red Crescent Society (PRCS) is a valuable partner, well-run and not corrupt, which has a greater operational capacity than ICRC, while ICRC has greater technical expertise. The two organizations pool staff and resources; other national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are sometimes able to help backfill capacity when PCRC provides materiel, such as tents.

¶13. (C) Asked about security concerns, Cuttat indicated a fear that with the enormous expansion of international humanitarian assistance, the risk increases that the ill-informed will heighten the security risk for all. Cuttat described the return of IDPs to Bajaur as a voluntary and informed choice as Bajaur, while not secure, was currently more secure than Lower Dir. He said, however, that ICRC saw ensuring that returns are voluntary as an essential part of its mandate. He noted that part of any military strategy to combat insurgency requires repopulating the area and that he fully expected subtle government and military coercion for return. Asked about how to obtain information on the nature and extent of destruction in order to facilitate rehabilitation assistance planning, Cuttat said that the armed forces have conducted a targeted damage assessment. He noted that LtGeneral Nadeem, the government's new coordinator of emergency assistance "deserves everybody's trust." Cuttat described Nadeem as straightforward, honest, and deeply concerned, and said that what he knows, he will share, and he will always help to do the right thing. Asked about need for helicopters, Cuttat argued against their use. He said there was no logistical problem in using roads while helicopters were expensive and posed security risks. He said that the roads were good, and there was someone in charge of each side of the frontier with no zone of criminality in between.

ISLAMABAD 00001079 004 OF 004

¶14. (C) Cuttat reported the following status for ICRC assistance:

--Swabi: camp run jointly with the Red Crescent for 6000 individuals; can expand to 30,000; extremely hot, need tarps to shelter tents from the sun.

--Malakand: Rangmala Camp is mainly run by Pakistan Red Crescent; providing food for 200 persons; just about at capacity; very volatile.

--Lower Dir: Eight trucks of food reached Lower Dir last week and were delivered by the PRCS.

--Buner: south of Daggar is out of the conflict zone; upper Dir there are extreme hostilities; last Wednesday a team of expatriates delivered a surgical kit for 50 war wounded; ICRC to return to Daggar on May 18 to set up distribution points for 1,300 households in lower Buner.

¶15. (C) ICRC provided the following assessment of the situation in Swat Valley. There is a large military force coming from the east and a mechanized division coming from the south. All passes in Swat are closed. Matta and Khwazakhela are experiencing heavy fighting; Matta Tehsil was ordered to evacuate by noon yesterday (May 17). The road is allegedly closed between Shangla and Khwazakhela. Mingora City is experiencing heavy shelling and bombardment by artillery and helicopters even though a large proportion of Mingora's population is still in the city. (PolOff has heard separately that the majority of the population, perhaps as much as 80 percent, had fled.) ICRC reports that there are currently only two doctors remaining at the hospital in

Mingora, but government and military authorities have been unwilling to let ICRC take the risk of going in to deliver medical supplies with commercial trucks, although discussions continue. ICRC has stressed that this is not a request for a cessation of fighting or even a humanitarian corridor, but simply safe passage for an ICRC convoy to go in and out.

PATTERSON